

Message Text

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USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 3374

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR PFOR NO IC

SUBJ: ICELAND: NORWEGIAN DEMARCHE

REFS: (A) OSLO 3361 (B) REYKJAVIK 1043

FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT OF THE NORWEGIAN PRO MEMORIA WHICH WAS GIVEN TO ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER JOHANNESSON ON SEPTEMBER 6. AS VIBE STRESSED WHEN HE GAVE ME THE COPY OF TEXT YESTERDAY (REFTEL A), THIS NORWEGIAN APPROACH IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH ANY OF OUR ALLIES. THE PM IS CLASSIFIED "SECRET" BY THE NORWEGIANS.

BEGIN TEXT:

1. AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF NORWAY'S EXPOSED GEOGRAPHIC AND STRATEGIC LOCATION AND THE GREAT SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE FOR COLLECTIVE DEFENSE IN THE NORTHERN AREAS, IT IS NATURAL THAT NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE FOLLOWED WITH GREAT INTEREST THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF THE BASE SINCE THE ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT IN ITS DECLARATION OF JULY 1971 (SIC) MADE IT KNOWN THAT THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH THE US WAS TO BE REVISED OR TERMINATED.

2. NOW THAT ICELAND HAS REQUESTED FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS
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PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7 OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT, THE MATTER WILL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT ALSO BE DISCUSSED IN NATO BODIES. BEFORE THE NORWEGIAN SIDE MAKES KNOWN ITS VIEWS THERE, THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT

HAS THOUGHT IT PROPER THAT NORWAY, AS A NEARBY NORDIC COUNTRY, SHOULD IN ADVANCE ACQUAINT THE ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT OF ITS VIEWS ON THE CONTINUED NEED FOR RETENTION OF THE BASE.

3. ON THE NORWEGIAN SIDE THERE IS FULL UNDERSTANDING THAT AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME THERE COULD BE A NEED FOR REVIEWING THE AGREEMENT AND IN THE LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT FOR CONSIDERING WHETHER AN ARRANGEMENT CAN BE REACHED WHICH CAN PROTECT BOTH THE COMMON SECURITY INTERESTS AND THE MORE SPECIAL NEEDS AND DESIRES OF THE PARTIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE BASE. IT ALSO GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT NORWAY IN NO WAY QUESTIONS ICELAND'S SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO DETERMINE FOR ITSELF HOW IT WILL PROCEED WITH REGARD TO THE FUTURE OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE.

4. AT THE SAME TIME THE NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES ARE NATURALLY GREATLY CONCERNED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ICELAND SHALL IN THE NEAR FUTURE INITIATE WITH THE UNITED STATES ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE NOT LEAD TO A WEAKENING OF THE RELATIVELY STABLE SECURITY SITUATION WHICH FOR MANY YEARS HAS CHARACTERIZED THE SITUATION IN THE NORTH. THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS THEREFORE FOUND IT PROPER TO WANT TO ACQUAINT THE ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT WITH THE MAIN POINTS OF THE NORWEGIAN OPINION CONCERNING THE SECURITY SIGNIFICANCE WHICH THE KEFLAVIK BASE HAS FOR NORWAY, IN THE HOPE THAT THESE VIEWPOINTS WILL ALSO BE KEPT IN MIND ON THE ICELANDIC SIDE DURING THE FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS.

5. THE RELATIVELY STABLE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE NORTHERN AREA FOR THE LAST 20-25 YEARS MUST IN THE NORWEGIAN VIEW BE SEEN AS A RESULT OF THE EQUILIBRIUM WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED IN THIS AREA THROUGH THE SECURITY POLICY WHICH IS CONDUCTED BY THE INDIVIDUAL NORDIC COUNTRIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GLOBAL SECURITY BALANCE BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS. A CHANGE OF INDIVIDUAL LINKS IN THIS BALANCE PATTERN
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COULD HAVE SECURITY CONSEQUENCES FOR THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONS IN THE AREA AND FOR THE AREA AS A WHOLE.

6. THROUGH THE SIGNIFICANT SOVIET BASE EXPANSION ON THE KOLA PENINSULA AND THE GROWING SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY WITH MAIN EMPHASIS ON THE SUBMARINE FLEET, THE SOVIET UNION HAS ACHIEVED A MORE PREDOMINANT CONCENTRATION OF FORCE IN THE NORTHERN AREAS THAN PREVIOUSLY. THIS IMPLIES A CERTAIN SHIFT OF THE BALANCE SITUATION BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS, SOMETHING WHICH IN TURN MEANS THAT THE SEAS AND AIR SPACE AROUND NORTHERN NORWAY AND BETWEEN NORWAY AND ICELAND GRADUALLY HAVE ACQUIRED STEADILY GROWING STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE. TO GIVE UP THE KEFLAVIK BASE AND THE IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS THE

BASE PERFORMS WILL IN THE NORWEGIAN VIEW RESULT IN A FURTHER
DISTURBANCE OF THIS BALANCE PATTERN.

IN THIS CONNECTION ONE MUST ALSO BEAR IN MIND THAT THE
KEFLAVIK BASE TODAY CONSTITUTES AN ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY
SITUATION IN THE NORTHERN AREAS WHICH ALL THE PARTIES CON-
CERNED HAVE DE FACTO ACCEPTED. SHOULD THE BASE BE CLOSED
DOWN, IT IS REALISTIC TO KEEP IN MIND THAT IT WOULD BE
DIFFICULT TO OPEN IT AGAIN IN A CRISIS SITUATION WITHOUT
THIS ACTION BEING VIEWED AS AN ESCALATION OF THE CRISIS.

7. IT FOLLOWS FROM THE FOREGOING THAT IT MUST BE STRONGLY
EMPHASIZED THAT THE SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY WHICH IS CONDUCTED
FROM THE KEFLAVIK BASE SHOULD BE PRESERVED.

A CLOSING DOWN OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE OR A SIGNIFICANT
REDUCTION IN THE ACTIVITY WHICH IS CONDUCTED THERE WILL
FURTHER INVOLVE THE RISK OF INCREASED SOVIET DOMINANCE IN
NORTHERN AREAS AND WILL IN A CRISIS SITUATION IMPEDE
ALLIED DEFENSE OPERATIONS IN THE NORWEGIAN SEA AND HAMPER
ACCESS TO THE ATLANTIC. A CLOSING DOWN OF THE BASE WILL
IN THE NORWEGIAN VIEW ALSO WEAKEN THE ALLIES' LINES OF
COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. AS A SIGNIFICANT SEA-
FARING NATION, NORWAY ALSO PLACES GREAT IMPORTANCE ON THIS
ASPECT.

FINALLY, NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES EMPHASIZE THE FUNCTION
OF THE KEFLAVIK BASE AS AN ALLIED BASE OF SUPPORT. IN A
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CRISIS SITUATION THE BASE COULD HAVE DECISIVE SIGNIFICANCE
FOR ASSURING THAT ALLIED ASSISTANCE REACH NORWAY IN TIME.

REYKJAVIK, SEPTEMBER 4, 1973.

END TEXT.
BUCHANAN

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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